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Protecting India's Consumers 40 yrs *Can I Trust What I'm Going to Buy?*

India has strong consumer protection laws, but everyday trust in product safety still depends on consistent enforcement. A Jaipur mother reading food labels out of anxiety — not understanding ingredients but “hoping it's fine”— captures a wider reality. Millions of Indians rely on quiet hope that products are safe.

World Consumer Rights Day's theme, “Safe Products, Confident Consumers,” raises a key question: is that trust justified? India has robust systems — the Consumer Protection Act, 2019, FSSAI, BIS, and CCPA — yet gaps remain. In five years, nearly one in five of 8.7 lakh tested food samples failed quality standards. Over half of states fall short on food safety benchmarks, creating uneven protection.

Online markets add new risks through “dark patterns” like hidden fees and pre-selected options, despite regulatory guidelines. While enforcement has begun, it remains inconsistent.

True consumer confidence comes from reliable systems, not occasional crackdowns. Progress is visible, but three steps can help: accessible product recall systems, continuous enforcement, and clearer labelling with QR verification.

Consumers shouldn't rely on hope. Strong enforcement will build trust, strengthen markets, and ensure safety keeps pace with India's growth.

Pradeep S Mehta
Editor

Abridged from an article that appeared in The Asian Age and Deccan Herald on March 12, 2026. The same can be accessed at: <https://tinyurl.com/mxf2zc7m> and <https://tinyurl.com/5adtem6c>

Message for our Readers

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India Opposes China-Led WTO Investment Pact

India has opposed the agreement, contending that introducing the Investment Facilitation for Development (IFD) framework through a plurilateral approach undermines the WTO's foundational principles. It argues this shift raises critical concerns about the organisation's future, which has historically relied on multilateralism, inclusivity, and consensus-based decision-making among all member nations.



India Advances Key Sustainable Development Goals



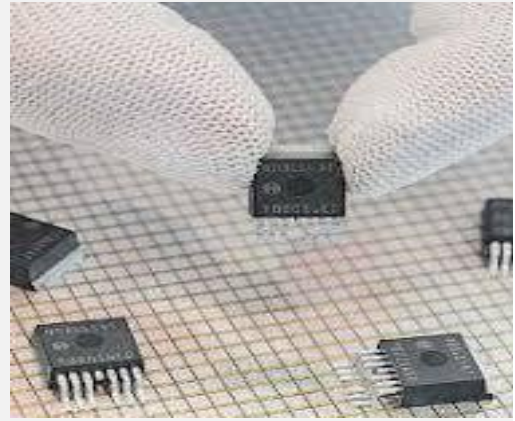
India stands at the forefront of sustainable development innovation. Noteworthy achievements include the complete eradication of open defecation in districts and the implementation of gender-segregated toilets in educational institutions, enhancing public health. Waste management has seen a transformation, with smart cities processing over 70 percent of their waste through advanced methods.

- [India Calls for Inclusive WTO Reforms at MC14](#)
Mint, March 26, 2026
 - [Iran War Could Push Up Prices for Many Other Industries in India](#)
Indian Express, March 26, 2026
 - [Northeast Connectivity: Exploring the Role of External Partners](#)
Raisina Debates, Observer Research Foundation, March 23, 2026
 - [India Steady as West Asia Conflict Spares Trade](#)
Ajaypal Choudhary, Wion, March 17, 2026
 - [India Aligning Growth with Climate Goals](#)
DD News, March 17, 2026
 - [Who Can Lead India Toward Sustainable Development?](#)
Bipasha Maity, Countercurrents, March 05, 2026
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Global Indian Talent in Focus as Centre Eyes Chip Autonomy

India aims to achieve self-reliance in advanced chip design and manufacturing under its semiconductor mission. While Indian engineers contribute significantly to global chip production, they largely focus on subsystems for MNCs. The government now seeks to leverage their expertise to develop full-system design capabilities and position India as a globally competitive, independent chip designer.



TRAI Tightens Reporting Norms



Telecom operators face tougher penalties for late tariff reports and data submissions. Trai has introduced new rules with graded fines and interest on overdue payments. Companies like Reliance Jio, Bharti Airtel, and Vodafone Idea must now report changes within seven days. Delays will incur daily charges that increase over time.

- [CCI Clears MUFG Stake in Shriram Finance](#)
Rediff Money Desk, March 25, 2026
- [6 New Airline Passenger Rules Introduced](#)
The Economic Times, March 18, 2026
- [Panel Rebukes NITI Aayog over Finances](#)
The Hindu, March 17, 2026
- [India's Strategic Autonomy Must Rest on Manufacturing Strength](#)
Aruna Sharma, Policy Circle, March 15, 2026
- [Made-in-India Bullet Train by 2027](#)
The Times of India, March 11, 2026

- [Banned At Home, Thriving Offshore: The New Reality Of India's Online Betting Market](#)

Aanchal Mishra, The Logical Indian, March 09, 2026



Murmu Calls for Stronger Women's Role in Agri Leadership

President Droupadi Murmu stressed the need to boost women's participation in policymaking and leadership in agriculture at the 2026 Global Conference on the Role of Women in Agri-Food Systems. She highlighted women's vital role across all stages of farming and their significant contributions to fisheries, beekeeping, animal husbandry, and forest-based livelihoods, underscoring their centrality to agri-food systems.



Panel Urges Scale-Up of Smart Traffic Management



A parliamentary panel has urged scaling up Integrated Traffic Management Systems (ITMS) with higher investment in road safety and infrastructure. Noting the Delhi Police's use of automated challans and surveillance, it sought clarity on the utilisation of fines. The panel recommended real-time monitoring, AI and sensors, and adoption of global best practices to ease congestion and improve traffic flow.

- [Justice Delayed: Consumer Cases Drag Beyond a Year Amid Rising Backlogs](#)
Richa Gandhi, Times of India, March 19, 2026
- [Urban and Rural Healthcare in India: Access, Quality, and Planning Challenges](#)
Oneindia Staff, March 14, 2026
- [44% Vehicles Plying on Indian Roads Uninsured](#)
Soumya Chatterjee, Hindustan Times, March 12, 2026
- [FSSAI Mandates Registration for Milk Vendors](#)
The Economic Times, March 12, 2026
- [India Will be Maoist-Free](#)
The Economic Times, March 06, 2026

Publications

- Priority Agenda for India to Navigate the Ongoing Period of Turbulence in Global Trade
<https://cuts-citee.org/pdf/priority-agenda-for-india-to-navigate-the-ongoing-period-of-turbulence-in-global-trade.pdf%22>
- Behavioural Reallocation after the Online Gaming Ban: A Multi-State Survey-Based Analysis
<https://cuts-ccier.org/pdf/behavioural-reallocation-after-the-online-gaming-ban-a-multi-state-survey-based-analysis.pdf>